

forms a highly planar surface that can reduce undesirable diffractions from height differences so that during a subsequent photolithographic operation undesirable diffractions from height differences are reduced.

64. (New) The method of claim 55, wherein said further including the steps of:

patterning said cap layer and said at least one dielectric layer to form openings to said conductive layer;

forming an additional conductive layer over said cap layer and in said openings, such that conductive vias are formed between said conductive layer and said additional conductive layer;

patterning said additional conductive layer to form additional interconnects over said cap layer.

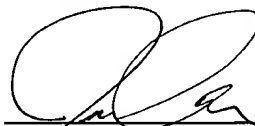
REMARKS

Claims 55-64 newly presented herein do not contain any new matter.

An additional fee is required, and a check for \$228.00 is enclosed. An Amendment Fee Transmittal Coversheet is attached which shows the fee calculations. If, however, there is any fee deficiency associated with this submittal may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1123.

March 19, 2002

Respectfully submitted,



Jed W. Caven, Reg. No. 40551
Hogan & Hartson L.L.P.
1200 17th Street, Suite 1500
Denver, Colorado 80202
(303) 454-2432 (telephone)
(303) 899-7333 (facsimile)